

# **FRIENDS of the BARNES FOUNDATION**

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## **FRIENDS OF THE BARNES FOUNDATION LAUNCHES MULTI-MEDIA AD CAMPAIGN: SAVE THE BARNES, STOP THE MOVE**

(MERION, PA) – Oct. 20, 2010. **Friends of the Barnes Foundation** today announced the launch of a provocative multimedia advertising campaign designed to foster support for preservation of the Barnes Foundation in its historic Merion setting. The citizen advocates will use print, television, a website, and the social media networks Facebook and Twitter to reach the general public with the campaign called “Save the Barnes. Stop the Move.” (<http://www.savethebarnes.org>; [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Am4x\\_hxFmU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Am4x_hxFmU)) The campaign urges an end to current plans to move the art collection from the 12-acre Merion site where it was founded in 1922 by **Dr. Albert C. Barnes**. The petition attached to the campaign calls upon state legislators to block further taxpayer funding for the destruction of an existing cultural and historic resource and demands that Pennsylvania **Attorney General Tom Corbett** (and Republican candidate for Governor) intervene to stop the move.

Removal of the Barnes art collection would destroy the Merion site’s current eligibility for **National Historic Landmark** status according to U.S. Department of the Interior Guidelines and adversely affect its eligibility for **National Register of Historic Places** status, according to the Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Commission.

**Costa Rodriguez**, a member of the Steering Committee of Friends of the Barnes Foundation, said of the campaign, “We are committed to fighting to save the Barnes Foundation from being dismantled. The Barnes is not an art collection. It is an art experience unlike anything else in the world. It is also one of our

country's most extraordinary cultural and historic sites. We Americans don't destroy our history. We honor it."

**Suzanne Hunter**, another member of the Friends' Steering Committee, said "This campaign is an exciting development that has tremendous potential for getting the attention of people who may not know about The Barnes. Whether or not they care about art, citizens of Pennsylvania from all walks of life are super-sensitive about wasting financial resources, abuse of power by public officials, and upholding an American's right to bequeath their legacy as they see fit."

**Benjamin Everett**, a graphic designer originally from Pennsylvania and now in Hawaii, praised the bold campaign concept in which art "speaks". "There is a double message here that projects Dr. Barnes' counter-culture persona and challenges to people to wake up to the importance of the authentic Barnes Foundation experience."

The release last year of a film documentary about the history of The Barnes, "**The Art of the Steal**" has resulted in significant new attention on the controversy. The film, produced independently by **9.14 Pictures** and Executive Producer Lenny Feinberg premiered last year at the Toronto International Film Festival. Now released on DVD, the film has inspired a new wave of protest from around the country, with widespread opposition to the move and sharp criticism of **Rebecca Rimel** of **Pew Charitable Trusts**, **Governor Rendell**, the late **Walter Annenberg**, and others. (<http://www.ifcfilms.com/videos/the-art-of-the-steal-2>)

Since a 2004 court decision permitting the removal of the Barnes art collection from its historic Merion setting, Friends of the Barnes Foundation has opposed the plan through advocacy, public education, and a legal challenge in 2007. Although their petition to Montgomery County Orphans' Court for reconsideration of the matter was dismissed for lack of legal standing, interest in support for preservation of the Barnes Foundation has not abated, but has steadily increased. The advertising campaign is made possible through a generous funder, who has donated anonymously.

For more information, visit <http://www.barnesfriends.org>

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